

MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 10, 2001

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Treasurer John Dean, in the absence of Chairman Bill O’Gara and Vice-Chairman Darrel Fournier at 1:12 P.M. at the Maine Emergency Medical Services conference room in Augusta with the following members present: Michael Albert, Jack Berry, Jay Bradshaw, Jeff Cammack, John Cannon, John Dean, Al Godfrey, Ted Johnston, Randy Keep, Jeff Maker, Harty Norris, Jethro Pease and Dave Wacker. Members excused: Darrel Fournier, Bill O’Gara, Tom Parent, Michael Quint, Christine Savage and Steve Willis. Member absent: Clifton Foster. Also present was Susan Pinette (Staff).

The minutes of the August 13, 2001 meeting were approved as presented.

Old Business

Sub-committee members reported on progress on the development of the following sections of the Commission report to the Governor and Legislature as follows:

2. Ted Johnston reported working on trying to understand what the impact has been in terms of firefighter injury, public and private property loss and public losses, death and injuries. We need to establish a benchmark from the last most recent 3 years experience so that we can determine if we are improving or not as we set our goals. The sub-committee will try to have this information completed for the September 24 meeting. Ted has contacted the Maine Municipal Association and it appears they may not be able to provide the Commission with injury breakdown data as relates to firefighters only. Dave Wacker advised that the Bureau of Labor Standards can provide the information from first report of injury reports. Randy Keep reported on the non-availability of fire data from insurance companies. Insurance companies are not required to submit this information to the Bureau of Insurance or ISO and the only way we might get it is if we can convince all of the companies to voluntarily track this information and provide it to us.

11. Ted Johnston reported that information is trickling in from the Congressional offices. He has received information from Sen. Collins and Congressman Baldacci and is waiting to hear from Sen. Snowe and Congressman Allen.

9. John Dean, Jay Bradshaw and Ann Schaad are still working on the death benefit program rules. John advised he is still having a terrible time trying to obtain copies of the federal reporting forms and is now going to contact the Congressional delegation for assistance. A definition of a firefighter was discussed at length. At first it was felt the definition in the statutes probably covers it. At 1:25 P.M. Chairman O’Gara arrived having been tied up in a major traffic jam caused by a tractor-trailer gasoline tanker fire on I-95 in Yarmouth. He advised that Senator Savage’s husband had just passed away and that she was excused from the meeting. Eventually a motion by Randy Keep, 2nd by Jack Berry that the statute definition of a firefighter be revised and submitted to the legislature to clarify the issue was approved. Title 30A, Sections 3151 & 3154 need to be reviewed in depth when developing a new definition that covers both the professional and volunteer firefighters responding to all types of emergency calls.

8. Mike Albert reported on the survey responses received and as to how the sub-committee is progressing with development of the RFP for the health care insurance.

7. Jack Berry reported on the volunteer incentive program. A conference call was conducted and also a meeting held this morning. They have talked to someone in New York State on how they have their retirement program set up. A discussion on how to fund was discussed. It might be a combination of local and/or state funding, a 401-K type fund, etc. We need to determine who will be eligible for the retirement program. It appears that the Wisconsin program might be something to develop ours around. An extensive discussion ensued on how we sell this program to the Legislature and to all of the firefighters across the state.

John Dean reported that Susan Pinette is now on line on the internet. The Commission needs to provide her with a printer for her computer. A motion by Jethro Pease, 2nd by John Cannon that the Commission authorize John Dean to purchase a printer at a cost of \$200.00 to \$500.00 was approved.

2. Randy Keep reported on the resource needs element and problems associated with acquiring adequate funding.

Jack Berry reported that he is in the process of acquiring the recruiting and retention books and how they can be obtained.

There was also a discussion on establishing a Maine Fire Protection Services Commission website. It was suggested that the Commission use the Maine Fire Training and Education website calendar as an alternative. As Steve Willis was unable to get to this meeting the issue was tabled until the next meeting of the Commission.

New Business

There was a brief discussion on what work needs to be ongoing before the next Commission meeting. These included the preparation of the RFP, definitions, sources of income, etc. Jack Berry talked about how out west a tax is affixed to power usage with the amount paid directly related to power consumed.

The next meeting of the Commission will be held on Monday, September 24, 2001 at 1:00 P.M. in the same facility. The meetings to follow will be Monday, October 15, 2001 and Monday October 29, 2001.

With no further discussion to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Albert L. Godfrey, Sr., P.E., P.L.S., C.S.E.
Secretary